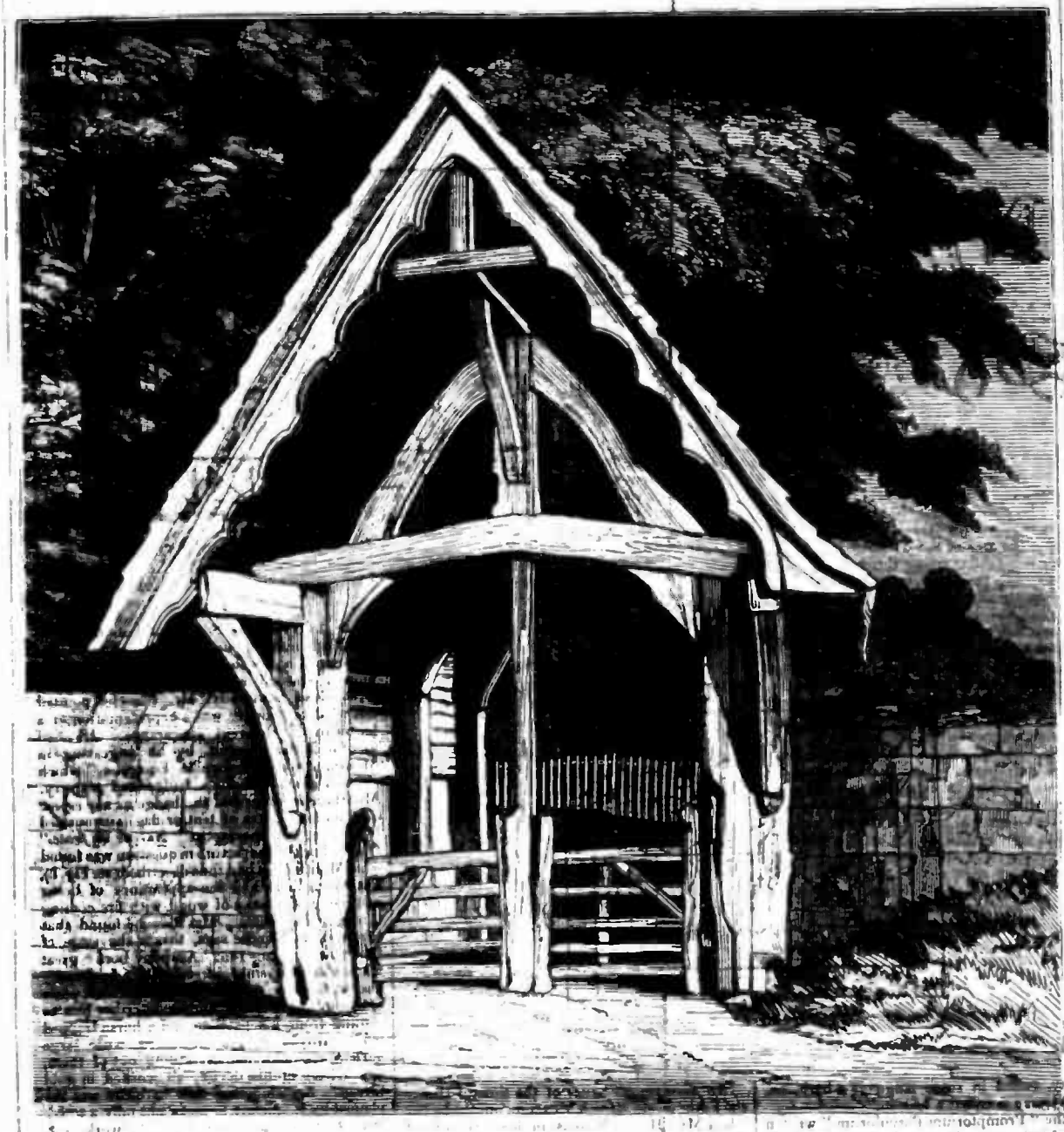
LICH GATE, BOUGHTON, KENT.



LICH GATE, BOUGHTON, KENT.

THE *Lich* gate, from the Anglo-Saxon *lich*, a corpse, is a shed-covering over the entrance to a churchyard, beneath which the bearers rested when bringing a corpse for burial. Annexed we give a picturesque example from Boughton Church, Kent.

THE BARBICAN, IN CONNECTION WITH OUR CASTLES.*

IF we look into a dictionary for the meaning of the word *barbacan*, or *barbican*, we shall find it called "a narrow opening left in the walls of buildings liable to be overflowed, for the water to come in and go out at, or to drain the water from off a terrace; or an outer defence or fortification to a city; a kind of watch-tower, any outwork at a short distance from the main works; and a cleft made in the walls of a fortress, to fire through upon the enemy." We do not from this get a very clear idea of what a barbican really was, and it may be worth while to try and make this more definite.

Grose, in the Preface to his "Antiquities of England and Wales," says, "To begin from without, the first member of an ancient castle was the *barbican*, a watch-tower, for the purpose of descrying an enemy at a greater distance. It seems to have had no positive place, except that it was always an outwork, and frequently advanced beyond the ditch† to which it was then joined by a drawbridge, and formed the entrance into the castle. Barbicans are mentioned in Framlingham and Canterbury castles. For the repairing of this work a tax called barbecanage was levied on certain lands."

Again in "Military Antiquities," vol. ii. p. 2, the same writer says "Next the bayle was the ditch, fosse, graff, or moate,"—"the passage over it was by a drawbridge, frequently covered by an advanced work called a *barbican*; sometimes the barbican was beyond the ditch covering the head of the drawbridge."

There is a small stonework, covering the gate of Bodiam Castle, in Sussex, still called the barbican; and the Walmgate-bar and barbican at York will occur to the recollection of some. At Carlisle Castle, Cumberland, there is also an outer work to defend the gate, which is known as the barbican.

The etymology of the word is doubtful. It has been sought in *barbacana*, low Latin and Spanish; *barbacane*, French; *barbacane*, Germ.; *barbacane*, &c. Spelman, the antiquary, derives it from the Saxon *burg* and *kenn*, a place to view or ken from.

There is a street in London, near Redcross-street, in Cripplegate still called Barbican, from a watch-tower, and where, by the way, Spelman died in 1640.‡

Camden, in his "Britannia" (published 1586), says, when describing London, "The suburbs also which runs out on the north-west side of London is large, and had formerly a watch-tower or military fence, from whence it came to be called by an *Arabick* name—*Barbacan*."

Stow writes of the same place: "On the west side of the Red Cross" (whence Red-Cross-street) "is a street called the Barbicans, because sometime there stood on the north side thereof a *barre*, *beam*, or watch-tower of

* Read at meeting of the British Archæological Association in Lancaster.

† Gibson's translation, 1695, p. 888.

‡ John Milton lived also at one time in Barbican.